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future be those which your correspondents endeavour to reform, and that should any of them attempt to sully your pages by turning into ridicule any of the works of the Almighty, you will treat their productions with that contempt which they deserve. T.

Belfast April 12, 1810.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

GENTLEMEN,
I OBSERVE in your last, queries relative to alkalies, which I think (part of them at least) may be easily answered.

1st. How bleachers may know if potash and barilla ash contain fixed air. This is easily proved by dropping a little vitriol (sulphuric acid) into a solution of them in water; if it effervesces, or, in other words, makes a hissing noise, with air rising to the surface, it certainly contains fixed air; it will be necessary however to dissolve the portion of alkali to be subjected to trial in boiling water, and kept during its solution in a state of ebullition, as it would be impossible to prepare it with cold water and the surface exposed to atmospheric air, without its acquiring a considerable portion of aerial acid.

2d. How to separate fixed air from the lees of the above ashes. Lime, fresh burned, either slacked or otherwise, will, by its superior affinity to fixed air, deprive them of it; the lime will all sink to the bottom, except a small portion which will be held in solution.

3d. If the lees of said ashes are

not freed from the fixed air they contain, how far using them in that state will retard their operation in the process of bleaching linen with them. To this I cannot speak with the same certainty; but, taking it for granted, that the use of alkali in bleaching is by its dissolving the vegetable and carbonaceous matters with which the fibres of the flax are covered, and, thereby preparing them for the application of oxygen, either from the atmospheric air, or oxymuriatic acid. In this point of view, alkali containing fixed air cannot be as efficacious; it being a well known fact to farmers, that the solution of vegetable and carbonaceous matter is greatly assisted by the addition of fresh burned lime, and but very little, if it be in a mild state, or impregnated with fixed air; in this respect alkalies are analogous. Soapboilers uniformly employ lime to render their lees active, as the alkali must necessarily part with its fixed air before it can unite with the oil.

But as there is a certain portion of lime remains in solution in the lees, can that be any objection to the bleacher? I wish some of your chemical Correspondents would take the trouble of informing us what injurious effect lime used in certain portions could have in bleaching; and, what would be the best manner of applying it with a view of lessening the consumption of alkali, seeing they have one common principle viz. their promoting the solution of vegetable and carbonaceous matter.

Banks of Bann.

L.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MADAME ROLAND.

Continued from p. 201, No. XX.

“WHAT is life but an ocean, precarious as those,
Which surround this terraqueous ball?
What is man but a bark, often laden with woes;
What is death but the harbour of all?”

On our passage—to-day may be mild and serene,

And our loftiest canvass be shown,
While to-morrow fierce tempests may
blacken the scene,

And our masts by the board may be gone.”

RUSKIN.

MANON having completed her eighteenth year, took the small-pox, her parents having unfortunately